1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

to the fauna is equally unsatisfactory. Despite the extensive forests, wild life is scarce. No one in Cherán gets a living from hunting, and the amount of game taken forms an inconsiderable amount of the food supply. Deer and peccary are sometimes hunted and occasionally damage outlying fields, but they do not seem to be numerous. Squirrels, rabbits, wild pigeons, and quail are among the animals of most economic importance. Badgers are known, but are not eaten. An exception to the general scarcity of wild life is the coyote. This animal appears to be numerous and to be a danger to livestock in the outskirts of the town. Larger predatory animals, such as the jaguar and the mountain lion, are unknown. Informants could recall only one mountain lion being seen or killed in the vicinity of the town. The region is, of course, too high for the absence of the jaguar to be surprising, but smaller members of the genus *Felis* are also rare. Only the wildcat is reported. The rattlesnake and *culebrilla* occur, but are not common. As there are few handicrafts practiced in Cherán, the community is consequently primarily agricultural and the only use of the forests is for lumbering, charcoal making, and grazing.

Little need be said about the people of Cherán or their language. Although white admixture certainly exists in the town's population, there are virtually no acknowledged Mestizos. Until studies of the Tarascan population are completed, it perhaps will suffice to say that the people of Cherán seem to be typical Tarascans, on the average relatively short and slender, although stocky individuals are not uncommon. Their complexion is relatively dark, the hair is straight, and the features are attractive. Corpulence in old age is very rare. Goiter or incipient goiter is common, especially in the mountain towns, although the disease is less frequent in Cherán than in many other settlements. Teeth are bad, a condition observed for the area in pre-Columbian remains also. Not only are caries frequent, but malocclusion is common. Individuals with attractive regular teeth are the exception. (Pls. 1, upper and lower right; 2; 3, center and lower right and left.)

The language of Cherán is Tarascan, a tongue which shows relatively few dialectic differences.

843 sidered frequent symptoms also. Sometimes in the early months women are sick at their stomachs and vomit in the mornings.

Usually a midwife is sought early in pregnancy and pays frequent visits to the enceinte woman. The midwife massages the woman with lard or cooking oil "to make sure the foetus is in the right position" and generally keeps an eye on the patient's health. Sometimes the midwife locates the head of the child during the massage. A fee of 10 centavos is charged for each visit.

A pregnant woman should not do much work, should not lift heavy things, and should take frequent baths in cold water in the house. She continues to grind corn and carry water; young mothers, indeed, are encouraged to keep active by older women, who believe some exercise helps the mother. She does not cook tortillas if she can avoid it, because the fire might "cook" the foetus. Toward the end of pregnancy some women are "delicate" and eat very little. At Capacuaro this is customary in the last days of pregnancy. Otherwise there are no prenatal food taboos.

843 An eclipse during pregnancy may cause
821 something bad to happen to the child. To
[789] prevent the effects, a red belt is worn underneath the several belts worn by women who dress in traditional costume. If Mestizo costume is worn, red underwear is used. Women should do nothing during an eclipse. The
● [144] occurrence of Mongoloid spot is reported. It is believed that this is caused by the woman carrying her coins in the customary fashion in her belt during pregnancy.

843 Women should not tie any animals during pregnancy, as this may cause the child to be strangled by the umbilical cord during birth. If the mother urinates where some animal has urinated, the child may be born with some part of the animal. Reports were given by midwives of children having been born with a pig face or a goat face and tail because the mother urinated where these animals had urinated. In the latter part of pregnancy a woman should always remove the lid from a vessel before lifting it from the fire; if she fails to observe this rule, the child may be born dumb. Clubfoot is caused by the mother not taking proper care of herself.

845 the fire, opened and rubbed with oil, and placed on the abdomen and coccyx of the patient.

Some midwives say the influence of the phases
821 of the moon determines the length of labor.
844 Eclipses also affect the labors. Witchcraft or improper care by the mother may be a cause of prolonged labor. If much silky white liquid is discharged in a difficult birth, it is said the mother did not bathe herself and keep clean or that she had relations with her husband after she should have ceased.

845 Breech presentations and other abnormal positions are known, although one midwife had not seen one in 5 years of practice. When they occur the midwife must be adept at manipulating the child. She puts lard on her hands and works the legs out first. The arms of the foetus must be kept at its sides and the chin down to prevent strangulation. According to one account of a breech presentation, several midwives were called in and an attempt was made to get the doctor from Paracho. One midwife (by her own account, at least) used a wooden bowl to distend the cervix, reached in and turned the child and delivered it successfully before the doctor arrived. In difficult births the child is sometimes born dead. The midwife touches his belly to see if he is still breathing; if he is, she lights a cigarette and puffs the smoke in his face "to wake him up."

Twins are relatively rare, but are known to a number of midwives, who do not report special trouble with them. One remarked that they came "like two cherries on branching
[144] stems." The Mongoloid spot is described as occurring occasionally.

Numerous abnormalities in birth are reported. Some are undoubtedly due to venereal
[753] diseases, about which the Cherán people know very little. Even our most sophisticated informant was a little dubious of just what gonorrhea and syphilis were. Some abnormalities, almost ceretainly due to syphilis, are attributed to the father having worked in turpentine. One midwife reported a case where the father persisted in working in turpentine, which foams when being boiled. When the child started to arrive, the mother nearly suffocated. All she could smell was turpentine. The child's arm emerged first; it was black and when the midwife touched it the skin broke and the

9: Lasker D-5 (1948)1953 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

no significant difference in head form as measured by the average cephalic index. Also, although facial breadth is characteristically wider in Mongoloids than in other peoples, the Indians of each sex in this series are not broader in the face than the Mestizos — either in respect to bizygomatic diameter or when this is taken as a ratio of the total facial height — or of the upper facial height. When it comes to stature, however, the Indians of both sexes tend to be shorter on the average than the respective Mestizos. A previous study indicates that differences in stature are found between individuals in the same series who had spent some of their formative years as temporary migrants to the United States and those who had remained in Mexico.[3] Such differences represent the effects of milieu. It is quite possible, therefore, that any variations in stature between so-called Indians and Mestizos are also due to factors in their conditions of life — especially diet — rather than to any inherited racial differences between the two groups.

Most of the traits which would be expected to distinguish American Indians from Europeans are descriptive attributes which have been counted rather than measured. Among these are dark brown eyes, black hair, straight hair, prominent cheek bones (malars), and markedly concave front teeth (shovel-shaped incisors). These traits are in fact slightly more common in the Indians than in the Mestizos (See figures 1-5). Among males, all five of these characteristics are found in 33 per cent of 97 Indians, but they also occur in 19 per cent of 100 Mestizos. The only males to lack all five factors are four of the 100 Mestizos. For the females the five characters are all found in 29 per cent of 55 Indians and in 21 per cent of 72 Mestizos. None of the females examined lacked all of these Mongoloid traits. As far as these particular features are concerned most of the members of the community, whether regarded as Indians or not, show some Indian characteristics.

There are other conditions which are considered Mongoloid. A fold of the upper eyelid which covers the inner corner of the free lash-bearing margin (internal epicanthic fold) is one of them. General deficiency of facial and bodily hair is another such trait. Jutting of the teeth (prognathism) is a third. As will be seen in figures 6-8, however, neither eyefolds, mid-digital hair on the back of the fingers, nor prognathism differentiates Indians from Mestizos in this group of Mexicans.

A higher proportion of the persons categorized as Indians falls in the older age groups. As some traits are affected by age, it is necessary to make allowance for this factor. For instance, eyefolds tend to shift from internal to external types with age; yet age by age in this series similar proportions of the various types are found in Indians and Mestizos.

[3] Gabriel W. Lasker, "Environmental Growth Factors and Selective Migration," *Human Biology*, 24: 262-280 (1952).

9: Lasker D-5 (1948)1953 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

145 Alveolar prognathism decreases with loss of teeth in old age and this trait has therefore been excluded from consideration, but extent of jut of the whole face (which is not noticeably affected by age) is not different between Mestizos and Indians. Some important characteristics of hair tend to change with age. Texture, baldness, greying, mustache and beard development and tendency to concurrency of the eyebrows are therefore excluded from detailed consideration; none show any close correlation with ascribed "race," however.

186 In summary, one may repeat that in the Mexican community under consideration, practically the whole range of physical types occurs both 144 in individuals whose parents are described as Indians and in those whose parents are considered to be Mestizos or Spanish. It is clear therefore that the physical appearance of the people cannot enter appreciably into their categorization of themselves. This supplements direct evidence that the ethnic identification is considered a cultural and linguistic matter and eliminates the possibility that considerations based on biological race significantly enter into the judgments.